

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMCONSUL Leningrad

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1853

INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

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1. Leningrad Military District (LMD) held its scheduled pre-congress party conference on December 26 at the Kirov Officers' Club. Colonel General A. I. Gribkov, Commander of the LMD, gave the principal address. Curiously, Gribkov failed to use the almost de rigeur formulation which includes mention of Brezhnev in references to Central Committee and Politburo. Gribkov was reported indirectly as saying that Military of District "unanimously and fully approve internal and foreign policy of CPSU, the practical activity of the Central Committee, its Politburo, directed toward further growth of economic and defense power of country, raising living level of the people, and strengthening peace." Mention of Brezhnev was also omitted in a later reference to how Communists and Military of LMD are meeting the 25th Party Congress "closely united with the party, its Leninist Central Committee, with a feeling of increased responsibility for fulfillment of their party and military obligation."

2. Brezhnev's name did crop up in the standard preliminary gesture which elected "Politburo of Leninist Central Committee headed by General Secretary of Central Committee Comrade L.I. Brezhnev" to honorary presidium, and in equally standard letter of greetings at close of conference to "Central Committee and General Secretary of Central Committee Brezhnev."

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3. LMD PARTY CONFERENCE PULLED IN QUOTE A FEW OUT OF TOWN GUESTS. THEY INCLUDED THE FOLLOWING: GENERAL OF THE ARMY S.K. KURKOTKIN, DEPUTY MINISTER OF DEFENSE AND CHIEF OF REAR SERVICES; I. I. SEN'KIN, FIRST SECRETARY OF THE KARELIAN OBLAST' PARTY ORGANIZATION; V. N. PTITSIN, FIRST SECRETARY OF THE MURMANSK OBLAST' PARTY ORGANIZATION; AND N. A. ANTONOV, FIRST SECRETARY OF NOVGOROD OBLAST' PARTY ORGANIZATION. G. V. ROMANOV, LENINGRAD OBLAST' PARTY FIRST SECRETARY, ALSO ATTENDED. NEUBERT

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